

# Albemarle, North Carolina

A COMMUNITY DRIVEN BY PURPOSE



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## AT A GLANCE

# ALBEMARLE, NORTH CAROLINA

**WHAT:** Charming, small city; population 16,000

**WHERE:** Part of the Charlotte Metropolitan Region, in Stanly County, NC

**WEBSITE:** [www.albemarlenc.gov](http://www.albemarlenc.gov)





# North Carolina

## A COMMUNITY DRIVEN BY PURPOSE

In a time where we seem to be more preoccupied with the things that divide us, in order to move forward it is necessary that leaders, communities, organizations, and citizens cross dividing lines and begin to work together on common problems.

That is the spirit of what is taking place in Albemarle, the county seat of government for Stanly County, North Carolina. The City of Albemarle, Stanly County, Pfeiffer University, and the local banks of the community have all

come together with a shared objective: focusing on the things they all agree on and working together to build a new future for the once bustling textile community.

Pfeiffer began by building a Health Sciences Center in the middle of the downtown. Albemarle and Stanly County governments put forth grant monies and made the necessary decisions to accommodate the land purchases for the construction to begin. The local banks and the community came together to raise local

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Uwharrie Bank is a community banking institution that was organized in the early 1980s as the consolidation of the financial services industry created a void in providing capital to local and family owned businesses. Currently, with total assets of approximately \$828 million, Uwharrie Bank continues to meet the needs of community based organizations and is a major benefactor to the communities it serves. The founding mission of Uwharrie Bank still holds true: to help create robust local economies that enable our neighbors to obtain a quality of life that promotes traditional values; values that inspire us to care for one another and create opportunities where our children and grandchildren can achieve financial security. To us, it's about more than a bottom line, it's about Making a Difference®.

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capital to help support the effort. What has come to be known as the “Pfeiffer Effect” is the catalyst to a downtown revival that is seeing the emergence of downtown living spaces to meet the need for students and a demand from retirees who desire to downsize. New shops, restaurants, and the renovation of the old downtown Albemarle Hotel are being planned as a vibrant village – offering a quality of life that is safe, inclusive, and evolving.

According to City Manager Michael Ferris, “When Colleen Keith became President of Pfeiffer University, we had heard she expressed interest in a downtown presence. Mayor Michael and I worked with the University to find a suitable location and examined several properties. When Pfeiffer identified a County property used as the County Museum, we approached the County with the idea of the property exchange. We provided the County a larger and more suitable building for their museum which had been

our former City Hall Annex. The City Council wholeheartedly supported the agreement executed between the City and Pfeiffer. We acquired the museum property and our crews removed the old building, then, we deeded the property to Pfeiffer for the Health Sciences Building location. The project provides Pfeiffer a great location for their new graduate programs and brings investment, jobs, and an age group that our downtown was lacking.”

Albemarle is a city of about 16,000 and is part of the Charlotte Metropolitan Region, about 45 minutes east of downtown Charlotte. It is blessed with a backyard playground comprised of lakes and national and state parks that further contribute to the desirability of a place to call home. Being located in the geographic center of the state and part of the Charlotte regional economy, new industry is taking a look at the community as an ideal place to locate, with its amenities and proximity to urban





centers and interstates.

According to Keith Tunnell, Director of Economic Development, “The Uwharrie Mountains, one of the oldest mountain chains in North America, are located just a few miles east of us, along with Lake Tillery and Badin Lake. Those lakes touch the Uwharrie National Forest as well, so we have many visitors coming through the area. One of our primary goals is to bring those visitors into our downtown. By adding entertainment venues, additional restaurants, and specialty retail, we can make downtown Albemarle the place to be in the Charlotte region to enjoy a night out or a weekend or weekday stay. Our downtown has a lot of charm and history. We want to build off that and create a destination that will bring in visitors from nearby metro areas but also cater to the students at Pfeiffer and Stanly Community College. I can see Albemarle as a vibrant,

successful college town over the next decade and serving as the gateway to the Uwharrie Mountains and Lakes Region with plenty of opportunities for lodging, dining, shopping, and entertainment.”

Ronnie Michael is the proud Mayor of the City of Albemarle. He speaks to the incredible transformation of the downtown, explaining, “Several years ago the City could see the potential for this change when Pfeiffer University was considering adding new masters programs. The City actively pursued Pfeiffer and obtained property in the downtown to make the Pfeiffer Health Sciences building a reality. Our downtown is now seeing change due to what we call the Pfeiffer Effect. Pfeiffer has committed to bring at least 225 students to the new facility by 2023, but they are also pursuing additional programs that will bring more students.”





# *Albemarle Business Center (ABC)*

The 282-acre Albemarle Business Center industrial park will have parcels available for industrial and warehouse clients in Q2 2022.

City of Albemarle Economic Development  
Keith Tunnell, Director  
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Web: [www.albemarlenow.com](http://www.albemarlenow.com)

*Contact The City of Albemarle Economic  
Development Department for additional  
information about this great new industrial  
park in the Charlotte Region!*



- Located On NC 24/27 & US 52
- Over 170 Acres of Buildable Property
- City-Owned Industrial Park Property
- City of Albemarle Electric
- City of Albemarle Water & Sewer
- 5G Fiber Network
- Piedmont Natural Gas
- 1 Hour To Charlotte Douglas Airport
- 3 Hours To Port of Charleston and the Port of Wilmington
- Stanly Community College & State of NC Workforce Training Programs
- Pfeiffer University
- Strong City, County & State Incentive Programs for Qualifying Companies.
- Low Cost of Doing Business – Below Charlotte Region Averages In Wages, Property Taxes, & Cost of Living
- Lake Tillery, Badin Lake and the Uwharrie Mountains along with a charming downtown make for a great place to live and raise a family – and big city amenities in Charlotte are just 45 minutes away!

*Special Thanks To Electricities For Certifying The ABC As  
One Of Its SmartSites Certified Industrial Properties*



## ALBEMARLE, NORTH CAROLINA

The influx of students has created the need for new restaurants, entertainment, retail business and housing in the downtown. Of note, the iconic Albemarle Hotel is undergoing a complete interior remodel that will maintain the historic structure and provide 29 new apartments and retail. The old Lowder Hardware building is also in the midst of a remodel and addition that will bring another 29 apartments to the core. Originally a hardware store built in 1902, the building was converted into restaurant space in the early 2000s and transitioned as different eateries and bars throughout the past 20 years.

And Uwharrie Brewing Company of Downtown Albemarle just completed a deal with the City of Albemarle to take over a former fire station in the heart of downtown and turn it into a micro-brewery, the first in the City. The first beer will be called Firehouse Red Ale to pay homage to the historic building and the firefighters who called it a second home. Owner Colton Baker has

over 10 years of brewmaster experience having worked for micro-breweries in the Asheville region. “The City did a great job of working with us and finding us a building that fit our need perfectly,” says Baker. “We’re excited about this opportunity as we grow along with downtown Albemarle making it a destination to come and enjoy in the months and years to come.”

As the Director of the Albemarle Downtown Development Corporation and the Main Street Program co-ordinator, Joy Almond is passionate about the potential of her city. She reports, “The completion of this and other residential projects will play a major role in the shaping of our downtown, creating a need for products and services after 5 pm. Another soon-to-open niche business that I’m personally excited about is the Tomahawk Throwing Range and Blade Shop. The business owner, Garrett Starnes, came to my office several months ago with his business concept, and has been a pleasure to work with.



*The historic Albemarle Hotel renovation will be completed in early 2022 with 29 luxury apartments in the heart of downtown*



With communication and advice from City and County staff and the Stanly Community College's Small Business Center, Garrett's concept is coming to fruition, with a mid-June opening."

One of the first recommendations Ferris made as City Manager was for the Council to embark on a downtown streetscape master plan – providing a vision and direction for the downtown that focused on developing a sense of place and community. He confirms, "Through our efforts and investment, we've created an environment where others can be successful and want to invest." In that regard, Almond adds, "We are blessed to have Uwharrie Bank headquartered in downtown Albemarle, not only as a major employer, but also a company that so graciously invests money and sweat equity into projects, activities and events for the betterment of our community."

The City contracts with Retail Strategies to assist in retail recruitment, not only in the downtown but in the entire community. Over the past four years, Albemarle has experienced unprecedented retail growth and that is continuing. The City is currently developing a new business center to attract large and small business and industry; construction will start later in 2021. Tunnell notes, "We own the electric company, the water, the sewer, and the landfill, so we have control of all the utilities. And we're reinvesting some of those profits into a new 282-acre industrial park on NC 24-27 that also fronts on US Hwy 52. That industrial park will try to recruit new business and industry; bring in manufacturing jobs that were lost in the textile and aluminum industries several years ago. The city is reinvesting in economic development and job creation through that industrial park."

The Mayor describes Albemarle as "a full



The new Pfeiffer University Health Sciences Center is changing the landscape of rural healthcare in North Carolina – starting right here in downtown Albemarle.

The City of Albemarle and the Albemarle Downtown Development Corporation are proud to be partners with Pfeiffer University in its mission to improve rural healthcare in our region.



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The City of Albemarle, North Carolina | Economic Development Department  
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service municipality. We offer all utilities that a business would need to operate here, with exception of gas and broadband. Both of those are privately provided. We have capacity in our water and sewer plants to handle the growth we are currently seeing and anticipate additional business or industrial growth when we complete the new business center.”

When it comes to a skilled workforce, Stanly Community College is a tremendous partner – providing technical and vocational training that is a significant asset for bringing in new businesses. They also fund a small business center downtown that helps with entrepreneurship and small business development.

Community is a common enterprise that includes neighbors and local businesses working together to create a desired future. To that end, the entire Albemarle community sees themselves as being

the place people come to get the training to meet the growing demands of health care in our society. In addition, they have lots of green spaces and safe places that afford companies a good location for employees to live and raise their families.

Most importantly, the community has a new collective vision for this place they want to build. They have a new trust and confidence in each other, and are working together to move this exceptional City of Albemarle forward. Mayor Michael sums it up well, sharing, “Albemarle offers an excellent place to live. We invite everyone to come see what is going on and consider making Albemarle the place to open a business and make your home.”

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## PREFERRED VENDORS/PARTNERS

- **Uwharrie Bank**  
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- **City of Albemarle Economic Development**  
[www.albemarlenow.com](http://www.albemarlenow.com)
- **ElectriCities**  
[www.electricities.com](http://www.electricities.com)
- **Albemarle Downtown Development Corporation (ADDC)**  
[www.albemarledowntown.com](http://www.albemarledowntown.com)
- **Pfeiffer University**  
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- **Garmon Mechanical**  
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